

Topic : Economy or Politics : Pakistan's Conundrum

1. Introduction

- 2- The volcano politics of Pakistan is a serious conundrum that inhibits economy to flourish. An unstablized politics will continue to drag the country's economy on negative side.

2. Unveiling the political and economic issues of Pakistan.

3. Politics is serious conundrum than economy :

- a. Political turmoil can turn upside down the socio-economic dimensions.
- b. Regime change without fulfilling their tenure is problematic.
- c. Unstablized politics compromise the democratic principles of Pakistan
- d. Politics cause divide in the country
- e. Politics drives youth to conflict.

4. Economy is serious conundrum than politics :

- a. Economic inequalities can turn the tables of socio-economic factors.
- b. Discontinual of economic policies ~~are~~ ^{is} more disastrous.
- c. Economic crisis compromise the democratic principles
- d. Economic inequality creates class divide in the country.
- e. Economic issues drive youth to conflict

5. Unraveling the priority : Politics as a greater challenge than economy

- a. Politics is a broader concept ; includes economic factors
- b. Regime change leads to dismissal of economic policies
- c. Unstability in politics cause unstability in economy which affect democracy.
- d. A well established political system can control divide in class and country.
- e. Peaceful politics leads to peace among youth.

6. Conclusion.

Each political party came to power through elections with their own mandate. Assessing the performance of politicians takes time because projects and policy implementation does not occur overnight. These conspiracies often undermine democratic process and stifle the progress. For Example, Operation Ajax 1953 through which Iranian prime minister was ousted by political propagandas led to authoritarian rule of Shah, marked by widespread repression and human rights abuses. Hence, the argument sheds light ~~that~~ on the view that politics is biggest problem than economy.

Thirdly, political turmoil and conspiracies can hinder the democratic principles upon which Islamic Republic of Pakistan was established. It can cause erosion of civil liberties, suppression of opposition and undermining the rule of law. As per Human Rights Watch Report 2020, after the removal of ex prime minister in April 2022, the followed government continued to control media through out the year thereby supressing the fundamental rights provided in Constitution of Pakistan. In certain cases, government have blocked cable operators and television channels that aired critical programs. This shows that political unrest could comprise the democratic rules and principles, making it greater issue than economic issues.

Fourthly, unstable politics can cause division among citizens of Pakistan. Different people have their own perspective regarding effective and charismatic political leadership. Unrest in politics will cause unrest and division in the people of Pakistan, which is a serious threat to national integration. For instance, ex prime Minister

arrest in corruption case cause violent protests in the country. In response, political party supporters destroyed many symbols of Pakistan's pride that included Jinnah House, Yadgare Shuhada, fighter jets of famous 1965 war and Chagai mountain model. This seems to be divide among country's citizens between supporters and opposition of ex-prime minister. Hence, unstabilized politics cause division among masses of a country.

Division among the citizens of society drives youth to conflict. Since 2022, Pakistan was witnessing political unrest which cause massive protests in the country on the call of respective leaders. As reported by BBC, riots on May 9 after ~~the~~ prime Minister was arrested drive youth to conflicts. They destroyed many important symbols of Pakistan's pride and in response they were either arrested or tortured. These issues create a conflict among youth, government and security institutions posing serious threats for Pakistan's stability.

While keeping in view the issues of political unrest, a group of analyst consider economy of same potential as politics due to different reasons. Like politics, economy has ^{an equal} potential to change the socio-economic factors of Pakistan. For instance, Economic Survey of Pakistan shows the GDP growth of -0.9% in 2019-20 and increase in 5.8% of GDP in 2020-21. The GDP rate was slower in 2019 due to Covid pandemic, industrial growth was seized during that time frames. However, when Covid was over, economic conditions got better and country show rise in GDP. In 2022-23,

GDP growth was declined to -0.3% from 6.3% in last fiscal year, because Pakistan is facing balance of payment crisis and fiscal mismanagement. So, economic crisis has same potential to disturb socio-economic factor just like politics.

Secondly, it is not regime change rather is discontinual of economic policies which are more disastrous. Discontinual of economic policies can lead to uncertainty in business, investment, thereby causing a downturn in economic activity. As per Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023, the investment growth in 2021-22 was 29% which was reduced to 10.2% in 2022-23, which was result of discontinual of previous policies. Hence, discontinual or abruption of ongoing economic policies makes economy more serious issue than political unrest.

Thirdly, just like political unrest, economic issues can also compromised democratic principles. Pakistan is facing economic constraints that cause economic inequality in the country. Equal sharing of scarce resources is one of the democratic principles upon which Pakistan had established. According to article published on project-syndicate.org titled "Inequality and democracy" argued that salvaging democracy requires economic stability. This means consecutive inequality will hinder democracy in long run, thus being more serious conundrum than politics.

Fourthly, economic issue cause class divide among the citizens of Pakistan. The rate of inflation is increasing day by day making it difficult

for poor to survive. On the other hand, rich are getting more rich with every passing day. Gap between rich and poor have ability to divide the country just as the political unrest does. As per Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023, Per capita income of FY 2022-23 was reduced to \$1568 from 1766\$ in 2021-22. This shows that number of poor in the country are increasing due to low per capita income, thus dividing the country into "haves" and "have not".

Economic issues divide the

Additionally, economic crisis drives the youth towards conflict by fostering frustration, resentment and willingness to pursue alternative avenues. Youth is more likely to engage in criminal or conflict behaviour due to economic or financial constraints. Opportunity theory argues that individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour when there is decrease in formal employment opportunities especially for those who are at start of their career. As a result, they either join armed groups or participate in illegal activities which might appear more serious threat than political unrest.

All the above arguments show that economy is more crucial than politics however, there are certain aspects that need to be considered for better understanding of serious threat. Firstly, politics is a broader concept than economy. Political stabilisation paves the way for economic stabilisation. When there is unrest in political system, economic issues would surely issue. Economic issues are the consequences

of political issues. As, Stephan Leacock has said that It is called political economy because it has to do nothing with politics or economy. Hence, economic instability arises due to political turmoil.

Secondly, dismissal of economic policies occurred due to regime change. Every government is elected with a different mandate, priorities and policies. There is a chance that new elected government might not continue the previous policies due to difference in priorities. For Example, P71 government during its rule provide tax evasion facilities which attracted huge foreign direct investment, however, after the dismissal of government, the policies was discontinued. As a result, a huge decline in FDI was seen. So, dismissal of policies are also dependent on political culture.

Thirdly, democracy is compromised when there is increase in economic inequality fostered by political unrest. Democracy is founding principle of Pakistan, change in politics will lead to economic crisis which in turn may lead to abolition of fundamental rights given in Constitution of Pakistan. Change in one will affect the other, but it all starts from political unrest that led country into quagmire of economic issues. This shows that politics is dominant to economic issues.

Fourthly, both economic and political crisis cause divide among the citizens in the country however, stablised political system can control class divide. Stablised political system means cooperai-

among the political institutions of the state which work for common cause of good for all citizens. While volatile political system will create gap among political institutions and they would not be available to work on problems arising in the country. Measures like progressive taxation, social welfare programs and labour protection etc can promote fairness and equity in the society. So, politics seems to be more contributing to address class disparities and is currently biggest issue in Pakistan.